

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Brussels, 19 September 2000

11423/00 (Presse 319)

133/00

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Zimbabwe**

The European Union notes with concern the recent police raids on the offices of the Zimbabwean Movement for Democratic Change. The European Union looks forward to the statement of the Zimbabwean Minister for Home Affairs due to be made on 19 September, and hopes that this statement will confirm the impartiality of the police and their commitment to the rule of law.

The European Union urges the government of Zimbabwe to acknowledge the legitimacy of opposition parties and their democratic right to function freely without harassment or hindrance.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.